

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Original) An apparatus for preparing and supplying a slurry to a chemical mechanical polishing machine, said slurry containing liquid components, which comprise at least a dispersion of fine abrasive particles and a solution of an additive, at a predetermined mixing ratio, comprising:

draw ports for separately drawing therethrough said liquid components, said draw ports corresponding in number to said liquid components;

a discharge port for supplying said slurry to said chemical mechanical polishing machine;

feed pumps arranged on feed lines for said liquid components, respectively, said feed lines extending from said individual draw ports to said discharge port, such that said feed pumps can draw the corresponding liquid components in specific amounts to give said mixing ratio and can deliver the thus-drawn liquid components toward said discharge port, respectively;

dampers and pressurization valves arranged in combinations on the respective feed lines on delivery sides of said feed pumps;

flowmeters arranged on said respective feed lines on downstream sides of the corresponding combinations of said dampers and pressurization valves for measuring delivery rates from the corresponding feed pumps; ~~and~~

a programmable logic controller for controlling delivery rates of the individual feed pumps by using measurement values from said flowmeters; and

at least one isolator arranged between one of said draw ports and its corresponding feed pump, said at least one isolator having an atmospheric vent.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said programmable logic controller performs PID control by using deviations of measurement values of said respective flowmeters from predetermined flow rates preset for delivering said liquid components in specific amounts by said feed pumps, respectively, and also control to follow up changes in said predetermined flow rates.

4. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a feed line for feeding deionized water to said feed line for said dispersion of fine abrasive particles and a means for cleaning and flushing with the deionized water said feed line for said dispersion of fine abrasive particles.

5. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a mixer arranged on said feed lines at a position between said individual flowmeters and said discharge port for performing mixing of said individual liquid components.

6.-7. (Canceled)

8. (New) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said programmable logic controller is configured to transmit a flow rate signal based on the measurement values to pump controllers for respective feed pumps to control pump drive voltages of said feed pumps.

9. (New) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said at least one isolator comprises:

an outer chamber having an outlet at a lower portion thereof leading to the corresponding feed pump, said outer chamber having said atmospheric vent at an upper portion thereof;

an inlet conduit extending within said outer chamber, said inlet conduit leading from said the one of said draw ports; and

a high level sensor and a low level sensor configured to control a liquid level within said outer chamber,

wherein said high level sensor is provided below said atmospheric vent.

10. (New) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said inlet conduit leading from said the one of said draw ports is connected to a recirculation system.